

Mike,

Here is my tentative proposal for the NetAnswers forum. Please keep in mind that this is by no means written in stone -- I expect that Glenbrook and CSi will pick and choose among these ideas so that we can create a forum that best suits the members' needs.

Offering unique content unavailable elsewhere on CSi or the Internet, the NetAnswers forum will teach members how to get the most out of the Internet -- and how to make it a truly useful part of their lives. By providing quality editorial content, the forum will give members the opportunity to learn about the Internet, offering answers to their questions and giving them information they didn't even know they needed to know.

The personality of the NetAnswers forum will compliment the existing Internet-related peer-help forums. NetAnswers won't have message boards or file archives of its own, but will contain links to existing Internet-related forums (the Internet Welcome Center, Community Forum, Fun Forum, Resource Forum and the upcoming E-mail Users Forum). Conversely, links from those forums to NetAnswers will build awareness of the NetAnswers forum.

The cornerstone of NetAnswers will be an enhanced menu offering access to the various features of the forum.

Components of the forum will be:

- * Newsletter. The centerpiece of the forum will be a free weekly newsletter. Each week the newsletter will focus on a different Internet-related topic, offering tips, advice, and links to sites. Laced with relevant information and humor, the newsletter will keep members coming back to the forum. From the NetAnswers main menu, members will be able to read the current edition of the newsletter, access back issues and subscribe to delivery via e-mail.

- * Tutorials. The forum will be also home to several tutorials. These will provide focused, step-by-step guides to using the Internet. Some will be geared towards newbies, others will be for more seasoned Net veterans. Tutorial topics might include using web search engines, using newsgroups, protecting your privacy on the Internet, and using "agents" to bring you information.

- * Internet glossary. The glossary will provide an A-to-Z lexicon of Net-related jargon, offering clear explanations of terms such as Java, telnet, helper app and HTML. The glossary will be relatively static but will be updated as new words creep into the Internet vocabulary.

- * The Hunt. The Hunt will be a periodic contest that will help members hone their Internet researching skills (and hopefully have some fun). Each hunt will ask members to use Internet search tools to retrieve ten tidbits of information, such as "What are the primary exports of Albania?" and "Who won the Indianapolis 500 in 1969?" Lasting a couple of weeks, every hunt will conclude with the answers -- and more importantly, details on how members found the answers.

- * Free Internet Books. This section of the forum will contain links to free books about the Internet, available on the Internet. Including a concise description of each featured book, this section will give members more resources they can use to

learn about the Internet.

* Ask Ms. Netiquette. Being a good Net citizen is a vital part of using the Internet. With that in mind, the nascent Ms. Netiquette forum can be integrated into NetAnswers. Advice on Internet etiquette, answers to members' questions and a weekly Netiquette tip will make a perfect fit with the NetAnswers forum.

A bit about myself: Kevin Savetz is a computer and technology writer specializing in the Internet. He is a regular contributor to Computer Shopper, MicroTimes, Internet Shopper and other publications. Kevin has slaved over several books, including: Microsoft Bookshelf Internet Directory 1996-1997 (editor), Internet Unleashed 1996 (editor), MBONE: Multicasting Tomorrow's Internet (co-author), and Your Internet Consultant - the FAQs Of Life Online (author.) He has also tech edited many books, including Daniel Dern's Internet Guide for New Users, 2nd ed; Internet Business Guide; and Mastering the Internet.

From November 1995 through May 1997, Kevin implemented and maintained the Internet AnswerMan and NetHelp forums on America Online. These forums were among the most popular in AOL's Internet Connection, and the AnswerMan newsletter was read by more than 70,000 members each week.